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## IMAGES IN PAEDIATRICS.....

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## Unusual foreign body detected on routine dental radiograph

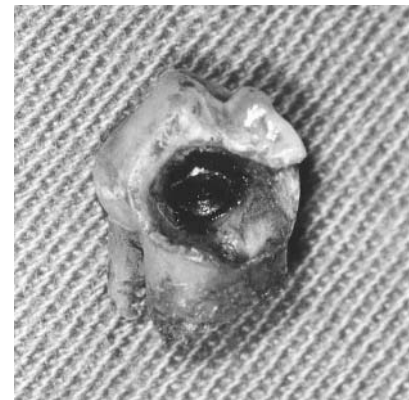
Frequently, foreign bodies are found in the oral<sup>1</sup> and nasal cavities of children,<sup>2</sup> and are discovered by the dentist during routine examinations.<sup>2,3</sup> These objects may be the result of the child's own action<sup>2</sup> and may cause pain,<sup>2</sup> oedema, and tooth fracture.<sup>1</sup>

A 10 year old female came to a clinic of a Brazilian university for a dental appointment. The clinical examination indicated a large caries lesion in the first lower left deciduous molar. The tooth was very mobile, although the child did not report pain in the region. After a radiograph of the tooth, significant resorption of the roots was noted. In the pulp chamber there was a well defined cylindrical radiopaque area, measuring approximately 3.5 mm × 1.5 mm (fig 1). It was decided to extract the tooth, and after inspecting it a small metal screw was found firmly embedded in it (fig 2). When the patient was questioned, she reported that a week earlier she had tried to tighten the screw of her spectacles with her teeth, but thought she had lost the screw, thus not knowing that it was in her mouth. After one week, the patient returned for a surgery check-up, then was discharged for six months. One year later, it was found that the first lower left premolar had erupted normally (fig 3).

Health professionals should be alert to the presence of foreign bodies, and educational campaigns should be conducted for emphasising the dangers of improper use of teeth.



**Figure 1** Periapical radiograph showing a radiopaque area in the region of the pulp chamber.



**Figure 2** First lower left deciduous molar after extraction with a foreign metallic body inside the pulp chamber.



**Figure 3** Periapical radiograph showing eruption of the lower left premolars.

**L Pomarico**  
Veiga de Almeida University, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
**L G Primo, I P R de Souza**  
Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Correspondence to: Dr L Pomarico, Praia do Flamengo 370/202-Flamengo, 22210-030 Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil; lupomarico@superig.com.br

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